

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-11, 13-22, 24-33, 35-44, 46-55, 57-76, 78-87 and 89-119 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 2, 12, 23, 34, 45, 56, 77, 88 and 120-128 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1, 3-5, 9, 11, 13-15, 20-22, 25, 26, 31-33, 35-37, 42-44, 46-48, 53-55, 57-59, 64, 65, 75, 78, 79, 80, 85, 87, 89, 90, 91, 97, 99, 101 and 113 are amended. No new matter has been added.

Claims 3, 4, 13, 14, 25, 35, 36, 46, 47, 57, 58, 78, 89, and 90 are amended to change their dependencies.

In view of the indication of page 12, item 11 of the Office Action that claims 80, 81, and 101 recite allowable subject matter, claims 80 and 101 are amended to include the subject matter of their base independent claims respectively, although the subject matter of the intervening claims is not included. Applicant respectfully submits that the newly independent claims 80 and 101 are patentable over the applied references. Claim 81, which depends from claim 80, is also patentable. Prompt allowance of claims 80, 81 and 101 is respectfully requested.

For at least the following reasons, Applicant submits that this Application is in condition for allowance.

I. Restriction

On page 2, item 1 of the Office Action, claims 87-97, 98, 116-117 and 127 are indicated to be withdrawn. The restriction of canceled claims 88 and 127 is moot. As to claims 87-97, 98, and 116-117, withdrawal of the restriction requirement is respectfully requested.

Applicant respectfully submits that the subject matter of all claims including claims 87, 89-98 and 116-117 is sufficiently related that a thorough search, which has already occurred, for the subject matter of any one group would encompass a search for the subject

matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden as the examination can proceed with the art of record already cited by the Examiner. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in view of the extensive search already made and the application of the art of record in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to applicant and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Thus, withdrawal of the restriction is respectfully requested.

II. Reply to Rejections

On page 3, item 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-10, 55-65, 68-69, 74, 118-120, and 125 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph as insufficiently described in the specification to indicate that the inventor had possession of the claimed invention. The rejection of canceled claims 2, 56, 120 and 125 is moot. As to the remainder of the rejected claims, claims 1 and 55 are amended to obviate the rejection. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

On page 4, item 5 of the Office Action, claims 1-6, 9, 33-38, 42-49, 53-54, 69, 72-73, 75-79, 84-86, 99, 100, 102-104, 106, 110-115, 118, 120, 123, 124, 126 and 128 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 3,934,810 to Henning. The rejection of canceled claims 2, 34, 45, 77, 120, 123, 124, 126 and 128 is moot. The rejection of the remaining claims is traversed.

Applicant respectfully submits that Henning fails to disclose the recesses facilitating radial deformation of the mold where, at least one of the recesses has longitudinal edges having a length on the external surface of the sidewall, the edges not touching each other over

at least a major part of their length when the mold is at rest, as recited in claims 1, 33, 44, 75 and 99.

Henning discloses a mold 75 with a plurality of slits 87 that extend part way through the wall 80 radially inwardly towards shaping cavity 81. The slits 87 terminate in rounded channels 93. These slits 87 have opposing walls 87', 87" which are disclosed to abut against each other (Fig. 7, 8, col. 3, lines 57-58). That is, when at rest, the sidewalls 87', 87" must touch each other, in contrast to the feature in claims 1, 33, 44, 75 and 99 that the edges of the recesses are not touching over at least a major part of their length.

Fig. 7 of Henning shows that the slits 87 may optionally comprise enlarged marginal channels 93 (col. 4, lines 40-44). However, the channels 93 do not open on the external surface of the mold except at the end of the slit. The major part of the channel 93 extends radially inside the mold with respect to the edge of the slit 87. Therefore, Henning fails to disclose recesses whose edges do not touch each other over at least a major part of their length when the mold is at rest, as recited in the rejected independent claims.

Claims 3-6, 9, 69 and 118, which depend from claim 1, claims 35-38, 42-43 and 72, which depend from claim 33, claims 46-49, 53-54 and 73 which depend from claim 44, claims 76, 78-79 and 84-86, which depend from claim 75, and claims 100, 102-104, 106, 110-115, which depend from claim 99, are likewise distinguishable over the applied reference for at least reasons discussed above and for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-6, 9, 33-38, 42-49, 53-54, 69, 72-73, 75-79, 84-86, 99-100, 102-104, 106, 110-115, 118, 120, 123-124, 126 and 128 is respectfully requested.

On page 7, item 8 of the Office Action, claims 7-8, 10, 39-41, 50-52, 82-83, 105 and 107 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Henning. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Henning fails to disclose the features of independent claims 1, 33, 44, 75 and 99. Consequently, claims 7, 8, and 10, which depend from claim 1, claims 39, 40 and 41, which depend claim 33, claims 50, 51 and 52, which depend from claim 44, claims 82 and 83, which depend from claim 75, and claims 105 and 107, which depend from claim 99, are likewise distinguishable over the applied reference for at least the reasons discussed above and for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 7-8, 10, 39-41, 50-52, 82-83, 105 and 107 is respectfully requested.

On page 7, item 9 of the Office Action, claims 11-32, 55-68, 70-71, 74, 108-109, 121-122, and 125 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Henning in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,937,438 to Fox et al. (hereinafter "Fox"). The rejection of canceled claims 12, 23, 56, 121, 122, and 125 is moot. The rejection of the remaining claims is traversed.

Applicant respectfully submits that Henning, alone or in combination with Fox, does not disclose recesses facilitating radial deformation of the mold, at least one of the recesses having longitudinal edges having a length on an external surface of the sidewall, the edges not touching each other over at least a major part of their length when the mold is at rest, as recited in claims 11, 22, 44, 55, and 99.

As discussed above for the §102 rejection, Henning fails to disclose these features in claims 11, 22, 55, 99, as well as 44.

As Fox fails to overcome the deficiencies in Henning, it is respectfully submitted that claims 11, 22, 33, 44, 55 and 99 are patentable. Claims 13-21 and 70, which depend from claim 11, claims 24-32 and 71, which depend from claim 22, claims 57-65, 68 and 74, which depend from claim 55, claim 66, which depends from claim 33, claim 67, which depends from claim 44, and claims 108 and 109, which depend from claim 99, are likewise patentable over the applied references for at least the reasons discussed above and for the additional

features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 11-32, 55-68, 70-71, 74, 108-109, 121-122 and 125 is respectfully requested.

Finally, on page 13, item 12 of the Office Action, claim 119 is indicated to be allowable if rewritten to overcome the Section 112, first paragraph rejection. As claim 119 depends from claim 1, which is rewritten and also allowable, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 119 is also allowable.

III. Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-11, 13-22, 24-33, 35-44, 46-55, 57-76, 78-87, 89-119 are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Request for Continued Examination
Amendment Transmittal

WPB:SSK/tbh

Date: October 3, 2003

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